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VENUS

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NUNQUAM ALIUD NATURA ALIUD SAPIENTIA DIXIT.

JUVENAL.

VEL,

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DE

POLLUTIONE NOCTURNA ET DIURNA,

EORUMQUE

SEQUELÆ ET CURATIO.

AUCTORE

ALEX. P. BUCHAN, M.D.

PREFACE.

THE opinions, contained in this little tract, have lain by the author, in manuscript, for upwards of fifteen years. They were then formed in opposition to those of the greatest physiologist of that day. Experience has, however, convinced him that they are founded in truth, and taught him that a complaint, which has been considered and treated as local and organic, consists, in fact, in a morbid state of the imagination.

Such phantasia, or imaginary diseases, are by no means of rare occur-

rence. Patients, who believe themselves affected with syphilis, or itch, pester practitioners of medicine to cure them of unreal maladies. Most of the medical men in London have been consulted by a young man of respectable appearance, who fancies that his person is affected with an offensive smell, which causes people to avoid his society. This opinion he maintains by a variety of arguments, which are by no means easily parried. I knew a young lady, who imagined that the common secretion from the nose was a disease that might be remedied. It is singular, that on being married, this notion was completely obliterated from her mind.

Yielding to the forebodings of the imagination tends much to aggravate the danger of all disorders. In a state of nature, men recover from wounds and even diseases, which in civilized society would prove mortal. In public hospitals it has long been observed, that those patients are cured the most certainly in diseases, and after severe operations, who testify the least anxiety about the event. And persons who are most apprehensive of infection are very generally the victims of their fears.

The author avows, that he has been in some measure deterred from submitting the following observations to the public, from a dread of being

classed with those worst of empirics, who, under the disguise of similar topics, fasten upon minds already infected by disease, and extort large sums of money as the price of useless, and frequently noxious, nostrums. He has proved, however, he trusts, that no such specifics exist, and that in such complaints, the patient's recovery must depend upon himself, and his return to the paths of nature. He has endeavoured to consider the subject merely as a peculiar case of deranged imagination, and to suggest the means with which a considerable degree of experience has furnished him, of restoring the mind to a healthy condition. "*Mens sana in corpore sano*;" the one is ne-

cessary to the other. Supported by the credit of such names as Tissot, Wichmann,* and Beddoes, he has determined to offer his advice to those who may require it.

To the state of mind, detailed in the following little work, the late Dr. Beddoes has, with much ingenuity, referred the strange anomalous conduct towards the fair sex, which constitutes so singular a trait in the character of the celebrated Dean SWIFT. A man naturally of powerful sexual propensities, which the *res angusta* prevented him from indulging in his earlier years,

* WICHMANN de Pollutione diurna Gætingæ. 1782.

Vide BEDDOES HYGIEA PASSIM.

he preserved an affection for the sex, which youthful imprudence had rendered him incapable of gratifying. He dallied with women, with whom his conscience told him it was improper to connect himself by marriage ; a more frequent cause of those protracted courtships which sometimes break the female heart, than is commonly imagined. This secret sense of his inability led him to indulge in those sarcastic invectives on the character and manners of the female sex, which so frequently disgrace his works.

That Swift sank into a state of complete mental fatuity, several years previous to his death, is a well-known fact ; persons of more feeble intellects, fall

into a similar condition at a much earlier period of life, from the same cause.

From the confessions of ROUSSEAU it is evident, that his mind was in youth poisoned, and by such evil practices the whole tenor of his life perverted.

If minds, such as these, have been thus unhinged, how extensive must this mischief be among persons of weaker intellect. It is sufficient, indeed, to turn over the pages of Tissot, or any writer who has published histories of such complaints, to learn the state of misery, and even despair of mind, leading to insanity or suicide, of the unhappy beings labouring under them. It is not the purpose of the author to indulge in any description of such hor-

rors ; but to explain to the afflicted their real condition, and suggest to them the mode of cure pointed out by Nature, and confirmed by experience.

Had not a title accidentally suggested itself, which might designate the nature and contents of these pages to those alone whom they concern, *φωναυτα συνετοισι*, without exciting general curiosity, they would never have been committed to the press ; nor, indeed, was it till the whole had been printed off, that the author, by the advice of a friend, was induced to insert his name in the title-page.

VENUS

SINE

CONCUBITU.

DIFFICILIS HÆC EXPLANATIO SIT,
SIMUL ET PUDOREM ET ARTIS PRE-
CEPTA SERVANTIBUS. NEQUE TAMEN
EA RES A SCRIBENDO DETERRERE ME
DEBUI.

M. A. CELSUS, lib. vi. cap. 18.

The difference of sex, or the distinction of male and female, pervades the whole animated creation ; and sexual intercourse is the means appointed by Providence for the renova-

tion of the various forms of animal and vegetable existence ; thus, by indelible re-production, maintaining animated nature in a state of perpetual youth, beauty, and perfection.

This truth is finely illustrated by the ancient hieroglyphic of Saturn, or Time devouring his children ; the symbol of which, is the circular serpent with the tail in its mouth, and its best verbal explanation is found, Ecclesiastes i. 4, “ One generation cometh, and another passeth away : but the earth endureth for ever.”

The efflorescence of plants is, in fact, the indication of their puberty, or attainment of the age, when they are capable of propagating their species. The flower, or corolla, is ana-

alogous to the pubis of animals, and in both the animal and vegetable kingdom, this period is marked by the effusion of a new, peculiar, and distinguishing odour. Indeed, so persuaded was the celebrated Linnæus of the truth of this analogy, that at one period it was his intention to have classed the various species of animals according to the structure of their parts of generation, as he has done with respect to vegetables; but he changed his purpose from the supposition that it might be considered as indecent.

The propagation of the species appears to be the object of the separation of the sexes. Children, till the age of puberty, can hardly be distin-

guished, except by their apparel ; and when that period is past, the female reverts to the male character, as is seen in the beard and hoarse voice of elderly women, and in the curious fact of the females of the pheasant, the turkey, and the peacock, after a certain age, assuming the plumage of the male bird.

The first command given by the Almighty to man, after creating him in his own image, was, “ To increase, multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it.” And as if such were the importance of this precept, that it could not be too frequently inculcated, it is again repeated nearly in the same terms, to the Patriarch and his family, destined to renovate the human race

after the ravages occasioned by the deluge. “ And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.”

It is not to be supposed that a divine precept, so imperatively pronounced, can be violated with impunity. Nor is it ever. “ Our Maker bids increase ; who bids abstain, but our Destroyer ? foe to God and man.*

Animals are endowed with appetites chiefly for two purposes ; the support of the individual, and the propagation of the species.

* *Ἔρως*, Love, was considered by the ancients as the origin of all things. Cicero speaks of *three* Cupids, but two are generally received—one the son of Jupiter and Venus ; the other, the offspring of *Nox* and *Erebus*.

Of these objects, by far the most important in the eye of Providence, appears to be the maintenance of the various species of animated beings. In a state of nature, animals are impelled by hunger, to encounter the most imminent dangers; but influenced by the storgè of sexual appetite, danger becomes an excitement, and the fear of death is extinguished in the ardour for renovating existence.

Many of the various plants, which, by the beauty of their flowers, adorn the surface of the earth, live but to ripen their seeds and decay, being annually succeeded by a new race.

The final cause of the existence of many species of insects and of rep-

tiles, appears to be the propagation of their several kinds, for when they have attained to the perfection of their various natures, and achieved this important purpose, they cease to exist; many of them expiring in the very act of generation.

Nor is the human species wholly exempt from the influence of this appetite. The obstacles to the sexual union, or marriage, constitute the real subject of almost all novels; and how frequently do both man and woman sacrifice every apparent source of worldly good to gratify the passion of love.

As the planets are retained in their orbits, and regulated in their courses; and the tides are raised, and again sub-

side in the ocean, by the antagonising powers of attraction and repulsion ; so are the various proportions of animated beings relative to their subsistence, regulated by their opposing propensities to love and war.

Is not the whole of that sublime poem, *THE ILIAD*, which has excited the admiration of the world for centuries, founded on the antithetic, but co-ordinate, impulses of love and war ?

The purpose of that state of perpetual strife, which seems to pervade the animal creation, appears to be to maintain the various species of animals in a state approaching, as nearly as possible, to the perfection of their several kinds.

To animals living in a state of nature, the great object of contention is priority of possession of the female, when in a condition fit for the propagation of the species. To this end, the males of many animals, naturally of a docile, and even timid disposition, as sheep and cattle, are furnished with weapons of offence:

Φύσις κέρατα ταύροις, &c.

The consequence of this contention is, that the female is impregnated by the most vigorous and courageous male, and thus the degeneration of the species is prevented.

It is a well-authenticated fact, that the females of all animals observe

these contests with apparent complacency, and readily yield their homage to the victor.*

The fury with which females contend, in the defence of their young,

* In India, where monkeys associate in numerous tribes, and live unmolested by the natives, it is observed that in each tribe there exists a chief, who appears to arrogate a certain degree of authority among his companions. No one dares to feed till his appetite be satisfied with the food furnished them by the religious. Another prerogative which he arrogates to himself, is priority of possession of the young females. This superiority he maintains till age, or signs of declining vigour encourages some other member of the community to enter the lists with him. If conquered, the elder instantly resigns his pretensions, and the new chieftain assumes and exercises all the privileges of his station, till beaten and supplanted by some younger, and more vigorous individual.—*Vide Sketches of India.*

constitutes part of the same general law of animated nature, subservient to the support of the species.

Even among mankind, endowed with reason, what is a more common source of mortal combat, than the favours of the fair sex? who, also, are ever prone to prefer the brave. The most courageous are, in general, the most amorous. According, indeed, to the system of Gall and Spurzheim, the organs of love and war, or to use their peculiar phraseology, of amateness, and combativeness, are seated very near to each other in the cerebellum, and have generally a simultaneous developement.

In a state of civilized society, where

man has extirpated the animals of prey, and permits those kinds only to exist, which are subservient to his purposes, he selects, for the impregnation of the domesticated females, such males as are possessed of the requisites most essential to his wants. Thus he contrives to produce an extra quantity of wool, or of tallow, or a greater docility of disposition ; but in the same proportion as these purposes are effected, does the animal lose its natural share of vigour and activity.

Such, also, is the cause of degeneracy among the civilized communities of mankind. When wealth or rank is the object of matrimonial

connections, instead of the personal attractions of beauty and vigour, the race must necessarily deteriorate, and, finally, become the prey of more vigorous and hardy assailants.

To imagine that the primary law, promulgated to mankind by their Creator, can be violated or evaded with impunity, is an approach to impiety.

That the proper indulgence of an appetite, implanted in animal nature, for a purpose so important as the renovation and preservation of the several classes of animated beings, should be considered as a crime or sin, by the Almighty who implanted it, is absurd. The essence of sin consists in the abuse, not the use, of our appetites.

To controul their proper uses, man is endowed with his distinguishing attribute of reason; and favoured with a revelation of the will of God, of which the latter shews the paths of virtue, and it is his duty to exert the former, to enable him to follow them.—But the present purpose is, to treat of the physical, not the moral, consequences of sexual love.

Animal life is sustained and renovated by successive generations of living beings. The great importance of the principle of propagation in the œconomy of nature, is probably the foundation of that alarm, and dejection of mind, attendant on any real or fancied imperfection in the perform-

ance of this function. Certain it is, that the mind is more disturbed by the slightest apparent deviation from a state of perfect health in the organs of generation, than by diseases of the most serious nature, affecting the system in general.

Natural, or congenital defects in the parts of generation are comparatively of rare occurrence. Of the number of monstrous, or imperfect births, a very small proportion indeed, are found defective in those organs. Instances of mal-conformation, doubtless, do occasionally occur. The coalescence of the labia, and even imperforation of the vagina in the female, may be removed by an operation.

In the male, the prepuce is sometimes so much contracted, as to render it impossible to denude the glans penis. This defect is of no moment ; indeed, it rarely attracts attention till the age of puberty, when it may be removed by a slight operation.

Cases occasionally occur of a defective bladder, where the urine is discharged from apertures on the surface of the abdomen. Three instances of this mal-conformation have come under my own notice. The whole generative system is deranged, life is a state of constant misery, and art affords no remedy, hardly even a palliative. Happily such instances are rare.

As plants may be deprived of their prolific properties by over cultivation, and extreme richness of manure, so may human beings have the powers of generation much diminished, and even extinguished, by luxurious indulgence. Persons, who are temperate, and not exhausted by over fatigue, are in general most prolific.

The more frequent source of the irregular, or defective action of the male organs of generation in the human species, to which the present observations are intended to apply, arises from the imprudent or mistaken conduct of individuals themselves. Like many other errors, it is most generally the result of evil communications, which,

with great truth, are said to corrupt good manners.

At a certain period of life, which is generally about the seventh part of the whole duration of individual existence, the physical means necessary for the reproduction of the species develop themselves. These are accompanied by a change of the intellectual as well as the bodily faculties. New ideas and new desires take place, which, in a state of nature, would be gratified by the enjoyment of their legitimate objects. From the unrestrained indulgence of the amatory impulse, man, in a state of civilized society, is restrained by various moral causes, while, by the circumstances in which

he is placed, and the present mode of conducting education, the energy of these impulses are augmented.

Man has been defined ‘a field animal.’ Certainly his natural condition, especially at the period of life when his physical powers become fully developed, is active exertion in the open air. Such occupations, by promoting transpiration, diminish the other secretions, and severe fatigue is followed by sound repose.

The ancients, acting on this wise principle, occupied the period of puberty in warlike exercises, or in the active exertions required to destroy in the chase animals noxious to man. Hence is derived the beautiful allegory of

Diana, being at once the Goddess of the Chase, and of Chastity, testifying that the best security against the passion of love is to occupy the body and mind in the energetic exercises of hunting.

This momentous truth is finely illustrated in the beautiful invocation of Hyppolytus to Diana, who had incurred the wrath of Venus, in consequence of despising her rites.

IAMBOI.

Σοὶ τόνδε πλεκτὸν σέφανον ἐξ ἀκηράτου
 Λειμῶνος, ὃ δέσποινα, κοσμήσας φέρω.
 Ἐνθ' οὔτε ποιμήν ἀξιοῖ φέρβειν βοτὰ,
 Οὐδ' ἤλθέ πω σίδηρος ἄλλ' ἀκήρατου
 Μέλισσα λειμῶν' ἥρινόν διέρχεται·
 Αἰδῶς δὲ ποταμίαισι κηπεύει δρόσοις.
 Ὅσοις διδακτὸν μηδὲν, ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ φύσει
 Τὸ σωφρονεῖν εἴληχον, εἰς τὰ πάντ' ἀεὶ

Τέτοισι δρέπεσθαι, τοῖς κακοῖσι δ' ἔθ' ἐθέμις.
 Ἀλλ', ὦ φίλη δέσποινα, χρυσέας κόμης
 Ἀνάδημα δέξαι, χειρὸς εὐσεβῆς ἄπο.
 Μόνῳ γάρ ἐστι τῆτ' ἐμοὶ γέρας βροτῶν·
 Σοὶ καὶ ξύνειμι, καὶ λόγοις ἀμείβομαι,
 Κλύων μὲν αὐδῆς, ὄμμα δ' ἐχ' ὀρώων τὸ σόν·
 Τέλος δὲ κάμψαιμ', ὥσπερ ἠρξάμην, βίη.

Hip. QUEEN of the forest, graciously receive
 The garland I have cropt from the meadow's
 Deep solitudes, where shepherd never fed
 His wand'ring flocks, and the scythe never came;
 Alone the wild bee sips the honied flowers,
 And chastity sits crowned among the dews;
 The unholy may not enter thy recesses,
 Thy wildernesses and thy awful shades;
 But those in whose pure bosom nature planted
 The love of temperance, are welcome there.
 Oh! gracious Goddess, from my hands receive
 This virgin garland for thy golden hair;
 I feel thy presence, and I hear thy voice,
 And answer thee; although thy face I see not.
 Oh! Mistress, grant that I may end my life
 As it began, and never be the slave
 Of Venus.

An allusion to the same subject is obvious in the parable of Adonis, who could not be restrained, even by the charms of Venus herself, from indulging in the pleasures of the chase, which at last occasioned his death.*

That these modes of education had the effect of preventing the too exube-

* All the caresses and blandishments of the Queen of the Loves and Smiles were exhausted in vain, to deter Adonis from the Chase—her pretence was the fear of danger from the animal pursued, but her real motive may perhaps be discovered in the pursuit itself, it being “the best security against the passion of love.” (See p. 20.) These two fables of Hippolytus and Diana, and Venus and Adonis, form, however, an *incidit in Scyllam*, for he, who was devoted to Diana, was sacrificed to the wrath of Venus, and the lover of Venus fell a victim to the displeasure of Diana.

rant secretion of semen, and its debilitating consequences is in great measure proved by the fact, that such complaints, as are well known at present, to arise from these causes, are hardly noticed by the most accurate medical writers of antiquity.

At present it is considered an essential part of the education of youth, to acquire a knowledge of the learned, or, as they are sometimes termed, the dead languages. The sedentary habits, which are unavoidably connected with such pursuits, cannot fail to injure the constitution ; thus sacrificing the blessings of health, to a proficiency in studies, of comparatively small importance.

The defect of free perspiration, tends to augment that plethora, which is the natural concomitant of the age of puberty ; that period of life when the judicious admonition of the moral poet should be observed :

“ Ye generous swains, while youth ferments
 your blood,
 And purer spirits swell the sprightly flood,
 Now range the hills, the thickest woods beset,
 Wind the shrillhorn, or spread the waving net.”

The consequence of this state of confinement, too frequently, in crowded or ill-ventilated apartments, is a species of restlessness or irritation, which can only be removed by active exertions in the open air. Many of the tricks, and mischievous follies attributed to school-boys, may be imputed to

this exuberance of irritability, originating in want of exercise, which is too often exasperated by the unwise practice of making confinement a punishment.

Many of the books read at school, are such as tend to inflame the imagination, and suggest impure ideas ; for it is in vain to pretend, that if a boy is taught to read one part of a classic to please his master, he will not read other parts to please himself.

But the real source of mischief is the pernicious habit of masturbation,*

* “~~————~~ Veneri servit amica manus :
Hoc nihil esse putas ? Scelus est, mihi crede,
sed ingens,
Quantum vix animo concipis ipse tuo.”

MARTIAL.

which is in fact another mode of getting rid of the superfluous irritability, the consequence of confinement. Though this practice is acquired by imitation, and if introduced into a school, spreads with all the virulence of a contagious disease, it is a well known fact, that it is chiefly prevalent among youth of sedentary and studious habits. It is the imperious duty of every master of a school, or a manufactory, to guard against the introduction of this pernicious habit, for once introduced, extirpation is hardly within the scope of possibility.

The laws of God are never offended with impunity; and the offender against the primary and most important of all

laws, fails not to experience the consequences of his delinquency. The first time this crime is heard of, it is atoned for by the punishment of death. “And the thing which ONAN did, displeased the Lord, and he slew him.”* Even when the action was involuntary, uncleanness was the consequence, and a certain expiation required. “If there be any man among you that is not clean by reason of uncleanness that cometh in the night, then he shall go abroad out of the camp, and he shall not come within the camp. But it shall be, when evening cometh on, he shall wash him-

* Genesis, xxxviii. 10.

self with water, and come into the camp again.”*

Another origin of this abuse may, perhaps, be traced in the idolatrous worship of the Northern Venus, named Frega, or Freya, in oblation to whom her votaries were accustomed to shed their seed.

But whatever may be the motive the laws of Nature and of God can never be infringed with impunity.

A youth unfortunately tainted with this vice, soon affords manifest tokens to the discerning eye, that a canker is seated in the germ of life. He resembles a faded flower, a tree blasted in the

* Deuteron. xxiii. 10, 11.

bud. The eyes lack their usual lustre, the purple bloom of youth vanishes, the features shrink, he becomes lean, pallid and sallow; complains of weakness, particularly in the back and legs, a symptom which has obtained for this complaint the name of *Tabes Dorsalis*, stoops, and is unable to endure fatigue. The appetite is irregular, frequently voracious, but if indulged is attended with the most distressing indigestions. The face is frequently covered with dark-coloured hard pimples. Society is avoided, seclusion sought after, and this species of self murderer at last assumes the appearance of a moving skeleton, enveloped in a leaden shroud. Illeptic fever takes

place, which finally terminates in an early death.

Nor does the mind suffer less injury than the body ; genius and talents seem to wither and become torpid ; the eyesight and the memory are impaired, and the faculty, as well as the desire, of acquiring knowledge, seems to be lost.

The imagination is also perverted. Existence is embittered by a perpetual gloom, and too many instances have occurred to the writer of these pages, of unhappy beings having terminated their existence by a premature death.

Such is too faithful a picture of the results of an unfortunate habit, generally acquired by thoughtless imitation,

and persisted in from ignorance of its injurious consequences.

It is singular that the female appears to have an innate perception of this condition of the male sex, dislikes and avoids their society, and feels for them the same kind of contempt as for the wretched eunuch.

Indeed, the reciprocal respect and affection of the sexes for each other, are closely connected with the physical powers of love. I knew an instance of a young man married to a beautiful woman of whom he was very fond. He received a severe blow upon the loins which totally deprived him of the powers of virility. He lost all affection for his wife, and his love was

converted into hatred and disgust, not only of her, but of the female sex in general, whose society he could no longer endure.

A lady, who had every external appearance of a warm temperament, and whose sister had a numerous family, imparted to me in confidence, at the request of her husband, who was desirous of having children, that she had no inclination for, or satisfaction in the embraces of her husband, but rather submitted to them with disgust. On examination, a schirrus hardness and contraction was found in the vagina, which prevented proper penetration, and all the parts of generation were in a peculiarly cold and flabby state.

Thanks to the attention paid to the moral education of females in this country, examples of their being tainted in youth with this vice are rare, although not wholly unknown, as some melancholy examples of whole schools being contaminated have proved. Its frequent occurrence in other countries, is proved by the Nymphomania of Dr. Biennville, where the pernicious effects on the softer sex, especially on their minds, are pointed out, and a humane and successful method of treatment recommended.

The bad effects of seminal discharges, produced by artificial excitement, are not confined to the human species. Some of the finest and highest bred

horses of India, acquire a habit of producing evacuations of semen, by rubbing the penis between their own belly, and the back of another horse. The consequence of this habit, which is said to spread quickly by imitation, is a rapid decay of health, vigour, and spirits, for which the sole remedy is castration.

Of those persons, who have unwarily acquired this habit, many, convinced of its iniquity, and injurious consequences to health, determine to give it up, thinking that, by so doing, they may recover their pristine health and vigour. In this, however, they are deceived. A new and unnatural association having been established be-

tween the organs of generation and the mind, the nature of which will form the subject of the ensuing chapter, the bad consequences of the practice do not cease even when the habit is left off. Involuntary discharges of semen take place during sleep, occurring sometimes so frequently as three times in the course of one night. The effect of these pollutions, as they are termed, is extremely debilitating. All the symptoms already described are very much aggravated, and the mind sinks into a state of the deepest dejection. It is in this state, that persons generally apply for medical assistance, and fortunate are they who do not

fall into the hands of men, who, without doing them any good, augment their distresses, in order to convert them into a pecuniary prey.

There is, besides, another species of seminal emission, generally the consequence also of masturbation, which has not hitherto received a due share of attention. When the seminal vessels have been much debilitated by the vicious habit so often adverted to, the passage of the fæces through the rectum, by pressing on the *veniculæ seminales*, and prostate gland, causes a discharge of their contents, not only involuntarily, but of which the patient himself is perfectly unconscious, the seminal fluid

passing away with the fæces.* This complaint has been denominated by an author, who has described its nature and treatment with much philosophical accuracy, Diurnal Pollutions.† This disease has not escaped the notice of CELSUS. ‘Est etiam circa naturalia vitium, nimia profusio seminis, quod sine venere, sine nocturnis imaginibus sic fertur, ut, interposito spatio, tabe hominem consumat.’

As this complaint frequently takes place totally without the knowledge of the person affected by it, and is accom-

* Vide de Pollutione Diurna frequentiori sed rarius observata tabescentiæ causa. JOH. ERN. WICHMANN, Goettingæ, 1782.

† A. COR. CELSI, De Medicina lib. iv, cap. 21. De seminis nimia ex naturalibus Profusione.

panied with much extenuation, loss of vigour, and many symptoms of consumption, when the symptoms indicating too profuse a discharge of semen are observed, without the patient being conscious of the cause, this circumstance should always be inquired into. The mode of detecting the presence of this complaint will be detailed in the method of treatment.

CHAP. II.

WHY THE DISCHARGE OF SEMEN BY
ARTIFICIAL MEANS INJURES HEALTH.

TURPISSIMUM AUTEM EST, ET MAXIME
NOXIMUM *vi imaginandi* QUENQUAM SE AD VE-
NEREM FICTA PERSONA INCENDERE.

MEAD, MONITA ET PRECEPTA MEDICA.

MAN is connected with external nature through the medium of his senses ; his personal superiority is in proportion to the energy of his volitions ; but the support of the individual, and the maintenance of the species, depend upon instincts which are comparatively little subject to the controul of the will.

The nerves passing to those essential organs, by which individual life is sustained, and the species renovated, as the heart, the stomach, and the organs of generation, are chiefly derived from ganglia, one use of which is supposed to be to obstruct the passage of the volitions, while they permit the transmission of sensations. Were it otherwise, man, by suspending the motion of the heart, the process of digestion, or the venereal appetite, might terminate his own life, or prevent the propagation of the species. Providence has not subjected functions so necessary to individual existence to the dominion of the will of man. And it will be found, that

whenever a man permits or exerts his will to interfere with these instinctive processes of the animal economy, their due performance will be impeded.

If a man thinks much about what he is to have for his dinner, he rarely makes a good one. It is a common observation, that the heartiest meal is made when the food is unexpected. If a person exerts the mind or the body after dinner, digestion is interrupted. Studious persons generally complain of weak stomachs.—The exoneration of the intestinal canal is more free when performed at the call of nature, than by the influence of the will. No person can sneeze or yawn by a voluntary effort. Accoucheurs know

well, that the less a woman in child-bed thinks of her situation, the more she gives way to her feelings, and refrains from all voluntary exertion, the better the labour proceeds. It is also observed, in persons who undergo surgical operations, the less they indulge anxiety about the event, the more likely they are to recover.—

Respecting sexual intercourse, the evil of permitting the will to interfere is still more conspicuously evident. If a man thinks much about the act of coition, he rarely performs it satisfactorily ; and it is a well-known fact, respecting men of the most vigorous temperament, that when an opportunity to enjoy a much-beloved and

long-desired female has, by marriage or otherwise, occurred, the anxiety to acquit themselves better than usual, has rendered them, for the moment, totally impotent.

Such are the consequences of permitting the will to interfere with the proper province of instinct.

In a state of nature, the amatory passion in man, as in other animals, would, probably, remain dormant, except when excited by the presence of the female.

Every person who, like the present writer, has had an opportunity of listening to the confessions of a variety of victims to this pernicious practice, must be well aware, that they always

endeavour to supply the absence of the female by the most ardent exertions of the imagination ; endeavouring, by an effort of the will, to keep, in the mind's eye, the form of some, perhaps favourite, female, to supply the absence of the legitimate object of sexual enjoyment.

Upon this improper interference of the will with an action wholly instinctive, chiefly depends the evil consequences of this vicious habit. The proper indulgence of sexual appetite, as far as inclination leads, produces less langour, than a single act of masturbation.

All the sympathies between the different parts of the human body take

place through the medium of the brain. And if we watch and analyze the nature of our dreams, it will be found, that they generally originate in some external irritation, associated by nature, or habit, with certain trains of ideas in the mind, which, during sleep, being uncontrolled by volition, excite other trains, various and incoherent, because emancipated from the dominion of the will.

A celebrated medical professor, of the present day, relates a remarkable dream illustrative of this doctrine. He had once visited the crater of Mount Vesuvius, and the event had made a strong impression on his mind ; after the lapse of many years, having occa-

sion to apply bottles of warm water to his feet, the sensation of warmth at that part recalled to his imagination, in a dream, the whole scene of ascending the mountain, with all its concomitant circumstances, in as vivid colours as when the thing really happened. When a part of the body becomes uncovered during the night, persons dream of being immersed in water, or walking on snow. I am acquainted with individuals who, if they take peculiar kinds of meat or drink into their stomach at night, never fail to have dreams of a certain and determinate nature. Those distressing sensations, known by the appellation of incubus, or night-mare, are now well ascertained to originate

from indigestion. Young persons, who are liable to wet the bed, often confess, that they are generally conscious of a strong inclination to make water, but are unable to awake. Children should not, therefore, be unreasonably punished for an involuntary fault.

If the power of volition be suspended, persons may dream while they are awake. Such is the case when, in an evening, looking into the fire, we let slip the reins of the imagination, and yielding implicitly to external impressions, a succession of splendid or terrific imagery is produced by the embers in the grate.

I have stated these circumstances to illustrate what, in my opinion, is the

real cause of nocturnal pollutions. Persons addicted to the vicious habit of masturbation, being accustomed to associate in their mind the idea of a female with their disgraceful practice, and the organs of generation being enfeebled by an unnatural stimulus, like the stomach of an habitual drunkard, whom the smallest portions of alcohol will intoxicate, the slightest irritation of the genital parts recalls this artificial association, and the whole process of sexual connection is completed in a dream.

The rapid action of the ejaculatory organs of the semen, the consequence of this unnatural action, prevents the due excitement of the female during

the act of generation, and is not only a source of painful disappointment to her, but also forms an impediment to conception.

In persons, not very much debilitated, these emissions commonly take place towards morning, when sleep is the soundest; they are generally conscious of their situation, and if they can awake themselves, or are awakened by others, the consequence is prevented.

The ancients, who believed that all dreams* were suggested by good or evil genii, assigned a peculiar kind of

* The word dream, teutonic Traum, has been derived from ter-imp, spirit or demon of the earth.

them as influencing the imaginations of the night, whom they denominated Incubi, or Succubi, as they were supposed to have the ascendant over the male or the female sex.

There is, perhaps, no man of the present age whose opinions respecting the animal economy are more entitled to respect than those of the late Mr. John Hunter. The sentiments here stated are in direct opposition to those promulgated by him, in the original edition of his celebrated work on the venereal disease. He there suggested, that masturbation, if not carried to excess, was less injurious to health than sexual intercourse, because, in the former case, the imagination

was less inflamed, or called into action, than in the latter. In future editions, these opinions, which at the time excited considerable controversy, were suppressed, whether from a conviction of their being erroneous, or of their baneful moral consequences, it is now unavailing to inquire. Neither should it be forgotten, that the solitary masturbator can repeat his crime as frequently as he pleases; but the consent of a female is not always to be obtained.

A doctrine, the very opposite, is here attempted to be maintained. That in the absence of the proper subject of sexual intercourse, the imagination is actively excited, and the attention in-

tensely engaged in forming an image to supply the place of the legitimate object of desire; and that exciting volition to interfere with an action that is purely instinctive, is the real source of all the evils attending on nocturnal pollutions.

As this doctrine also leads to a rational, and commonly successful, method of treatment, it affords some reasons for supposing it to be founded on the general truth expressed in the epigraphic prefixed to this little work:

NUNQUAM ALIUD NATURA, ALIUD SAPIENTIA
DIXIT.

CHAP. III.

OF THE TREATMENT.

CONCUBITUS VERO NEQUE NIMIS CONCUPI-
SCENDUS, NEQUE NIMIS PERTIMESCENDUS EST.
RARUS, CORPUS EXCITAT ; FREQUENS SOLVIT.
CELSUS, LIB. I. CAP. 2.

HAVING endeavoured to prove, that the cause of nocturnal pollutions, which, when frequent, certainly constitute a serious disease, exists in the mind rather than the body, it follows that the method of cure ought to be directed to the former, as the real seat of the complaint.

The intimate connection between the mind and the organs of generation, is proved by a variety of circumstances. Complaints of this kind are infinitely more common among sedentary and literary persons, such as scholars, artists, persons in the habit of exerting their minds and combining their ideas, than others.

The foundation of an ancient opinion very widely diffused, that it was possible to produce impotency, and to prevent the consummation of marriage by a kind of magical incantation, must have depended on this connection between the mind and the genital organs. This operation was termed maleficiating, in French, *nouer l'equi-*

lette, or tying the point. Lord Bacon, in his Natural History, says, “ that in Zant it was very common to make men impotent to accompany their wives. The like is practised in Gascony ; where it is termed *nouer l’eguilette*. It is practised always upon the wedding-day ; and in Zant the mothers themselves do it, because thereby they can hinder other charms and undo their own. It is a thing the civil law taketh knowledge of, and, therefore, is of no light regard.” The works of cotemporary medical writers abound with recipès for the prevention and cure of this species of witchcraft.

The various hopes and fears which frequently agitate the mind on the eve

of so important an event in human life as marriage, necessarily tend to induce an interference of the will with an action, which that faculty may, indeed, interrupt, but can never promote. At a period, when a belief in the interposition of planetary and supernatural agency universally prevailed, men readily attributed an accident, which was observed frequently to occur, but the nature of which they were unable to explain, to the influence of magic; and the professors of witchcraft, taking advantage of this opinion, would not fail to encourage a belief tending so much to augment the profits of their particular calling.

The account of this species of sor-

cery given by Montaigne, himself a native of Gascony, in whose time it was very prevalent, and of the ingenious means employed by him to secure his friend from its influence, while it strongly manifests the superiority of his philosophic mind to the prejudices of the age in which he lived, tends also so powerfully to illustrate the point of view in which I can consider this subject, that I shall offer no apology for quoting the whole passage.

“ I am inclined to think that these pleasant kind of bands with which all the world appears at present to be enthralled, and which form the general subject of conversation, are, in fact, merely the effects of fear and appre-

hension. For I know, by experience, that a certain person, for whose veracity I can answer as for my own, and who is as little liable to weakness or apprehension of enchantment as any man, having occasion to relate to another an account of an extraordinary defect of vigour when it stood him most in need, on a similar occasion, his imagination was so affected with this story, that the same thing happened to himself. And from that period he was occasionally liable to similar failures ; and this villanous recollection of his misgiving plagued and mastered him. He at length found a kind of remedy for this trick in one of another kind. This consisted in an-

nouncing and confessing before hand, this peculiar infirmity ; the distraction of his mind was diminished by expecting the evil, and the influence of his imagination considerably diminished. When his mind was unrestrained, and his body in good health, he found himself as vigorous as ever, and by attending to these circumstances, he at length obtained a complete cure.

“ What a person has once achieved, he can do again, if not prevented from mere debility. For this misfortune is only to be dreaded in circumstances where the mind is over-strained by desire, or subjugated from respect, and particularly where we are called upon in a sudden and unexpected

manner. Is there no remedy for this evil? I have known some who have tried with success the experiment of bringing their passions half satisfied to the beloved object, by way of diminishing the ardour of that fury, which, with age became less impotent, as it is, in fact, less potent. And another, who made a good use of the assurance of a friend, who persuaded him, that he was possessed of a counter-charm sufficiently potent to preserve him against all such enchantments.—It is better I should relate all the circumstances of this affair.

“ A certain count of Tresbon, with whom I was particularly intimate, married a very handsome dame, who had

formerly been courted by some who assisted at the marriage-feast; his friends became uneasy, particularly respecting an old lady, a relation of the bride, at whose house the wedding was held, and who was supposed to practise sorcery. With all this he made me acquainted. I requested he would repose implicit confidence in me.

“ Fortunately I had about me a flat piece of gold, upon which were engraved certain celestial figures against pain of the head, and strokes of the sun, when placed upon the summit of the head; and to keep it there, there was a ribband attached to fasten it under the chin. A trick akin to that

which has been mentioned occurred to me. Jaques Peletier, who then lived with me, presented me with this ingenious rarity. I determined to make a good use of this article, and said to the count that he must take his chance as others, that he undoubtedly had enemies; but advised him to go fearlessly to bed; that I would stand by him as a friend, and if need were, would not even spare a miracle which it was in my power to perform; provided he would promise upon his honour, to keep my secret faithfully; and that, when evening came, and the caudle-cup was handed round, if he found himself under any apprehension, he would make me a pre-concerted sign.

“ His senses and mind had been so bamboozled by such stories, that his imagination was disturbed, he doubted his powers, and made the signal agreed upon.

“ I whispered in his ear, that he should get out of bed on pretence of turning us out of the chamber; that he should, by way of joke, take the night-gown I had on, (we were nearly of the same stature,) and put it on himself; as soon as he had executed my orders, which were, that when we were gone, he should rise, under the pretence of making water, and repeat three times a certain form of words, and perform certain rites. That on each of these three times he should

place the medal, which I put into his hand, carefully upon the centre of his loins, with the figures in a particular position. Having done this, and the last time, having carefully fastened the ribband in such a manner that the medal could not slip off, nor change its position, he should return fearlessly to his matrimonial duties, not forgetting to throw my night-gown upon the bed, in such manner as to cover them both. These observances in reality produced the effects attributed to them. Our thoughts cannot emancipate themselves, except by means derived from some abstruse science. Their very singularity gives them importance and respect. In fine, certain it is, that my

characters proved more venereal than solar, more active than preventive. Moreover, it was a quick and inquisitive humour that tempted me to this experiment, which, in truth, is foreign to my narrative. I am an enemy to all subtle and protracted actions, and detest cunning and trick, whether exercised for amusement or profit. If the action be not vicious, the means are. Amasis, king of Egypt, espoused Lao-dicea, a beautiful Grecian lady; he, who was himself abundantly vigorous in general, found himself in this instance taken a-back, and threatened to put her to death, conceiving it to be the consequence of enchantment. As these are matters of imagination,

she persuaded him to try acts of devotion. Having made his vows and oblations to Venus, he found himself divinely restored, on the very first night after having sacrificed to the goddess. One may well complain of the indocile liberty of this member, so exacting in his demands when we do not want his services, and failing us so scurvily when we most stand in need of him ; so imperiously thwarting the authority of our will, and refusing, with so much pride and obstinacy, our solicitations, both mental and manual. Nevertheless, in putting up with his rebellion, and even with clear proofs of his condemnation, by pleading his own cause, he has generally obtained my pardon

and forgiveness. Sometimes I have suspected his neighbouring companions to have conspired to injure him from mere envy of the complacency and utility of his functions, and having made common cause, fame malignantly accusing him of sins, which were, in truth, their mutual fault."

As a further illustration of the point of view in which I consider these affections, I shall offer the following case, which occurred to my notice many years ago.

The subsequent narrative may also serve to explain a meaning, which it is not easy to convey in general terms:

A young man of a strong and ardent imagination, whose athletic ap-

pearance offered the most satisfactory proof that his constitution had suffered no material injury from some improper habits acquired at school, about the age of twenty happened accidentally to peruse the treatise of the celebrated Dr. Tissot. From some of the horrors there detailed, his mind, naturally susceptible, immediately took the alarm. He conceived, that he had for ever ruined his constitution, had rendered himself impotent, and, under the impression of being his own assassin, was become unfit to live. So powerfully was his imagination affected by the supposed enormity of his crime, and influenced by the notion that it was his duty to warn others against a

similar danger, that he purchased every copy of Tissot he could lay his hands on, carried them in his pocket, and distributed them, accompanied with suitable remonstrances, to such young men, and even to the young women, of his acquaintance, whom he conceived to be in danger of lapsing into similar errors. The derision to which such conduct necessarily exposed him, tended to aggravate his mental distress: he, however, took the trouble, as he expressed himself, in some letters deliberately left for the perusal of his friends, to drag on existence for a twelvemonth, under the pressure of these afflictions, in order that he might be enabled to discharge some trifling

pecuniary obligations. This purpose being completed, he put a period to his existence by shooting himself through the head.

Instead of meeting with a book, in which, I am ready to allow, from the best of motives, the injurious consequences of certain pernicious habits are placed in the strongest point of view, had this young man confided his supposed errors to some humane person, who, by convincing him that his complaints were at least in equal measure connected with the state of the mind, as of the body, and assuring him that a restoration to health was by no means impossible, could have succeeded in soothing his wounded

spirit, there can be little doubt but that an individual, whose strong sense of moral rectitude afforded the best proof of an excellent disposition, might have been preserved to his friends and society.

Several cases, where mental affections, originating in causes of a similar kind, have terminated in suicide, are related in the *Zoonomia* of Dr. Darwin.

It is almost unnecessary to say, that the first and indispensable step on the part of the patient is an immediate and total relinquishment of the vile and unmanly practice which is the source of all such complaints. The man whose mind is so depraved as to

persist in a course of vicious indulgence, notwithstanding a conviction of the moral as well as the physical evils attending on it, can have no more reason to expect the restoration of vigour, than the incorrigible drunkard can hope for that health which is the mead of temperance.

To discover and to check in their commencement the vicious habits from which these complaints originate, comes more immediately within the province of those to whom the important task of education is entrusted. It constitutes, indeed, a delicate and a difficult part of their duty. Let me, however, be permitted to suggest, that ridicule and contempt would, perhaps, be found

more effectual weapons to combat a propensity to these immoral and enervating habits, than a more serious representation of their ultimately injurious consequences. To comprehend the latter, necessarily implies the possession of a share of information concerning subjects, with which it is better, at least, to suppose the young mind unacquainted. But when the mischief is done, and the mind has taken the alarm, whatever may be deemed the most prudent conduct on the part of the tutor, it never can constitute any portion of wisdom, and still less of duty, in the physician, to aggravate the mental distress of his patient, by insisting on the moral evil

of such habits, beyond what may be necessary to prevent a repetition of them; which, however, is rarely necessary, when the patient has become sufficiently sensible of his situation to apply for the assistance of medicine.

So infatuated are the votaries to this vice, that I have known several cases where it was requisite to keep the patient in a strait-waiscoat day and night for many weeks, to prevent self-abuse, and, even after this severe treatment, a complete recovery has taken place. The ancient practice of infibulation probably originated in an attempt to prevent this vicious habit.

There are two distinct methods of treating this complaint. By endeavouring to prevent the repetition of the

vouring to restore the constitution to its pristine vigour ; or by diminishing or preventing the secretion of the seminal fluid.

But the first purpose to be effected, is to break that unnatural association of ideas, which is the primary cause of this complaint. This is best done by administering a grain of pure opium, or some other sedative, every night, till the habit is broken through. Costiveness must be guarded against by the combination of some gentle aperient.

Strict attention must also be paid to the state of the mind. Constant occupation is the best means of excluding obscene ideas, which are prone to

haunt the idle and the solitary. Exercise in the open air, application to business, and moderate indulgence in the pleasures of society, are all proper. Solitude and idleness are to be carefully avoided. Where circumstances render it convenient, a long and interesting journey, in the society of an agreeable friend, is highly expedient.

When the body is feeble it is always irritable; by irritable is meant a morbid sensibility to all impressions, whether external or internal. Such a state of the constitution ever accompanies the complaint at present treated of. To remove this state no means ought to be neglected; for it should be generally understood, that

there exist no means of invigorating the organs of generation, except such as strengthen the constitution in general.

A plentiful supper taken after much fatigue is particularly injurious to delicate persons.

It is upon the false pretences of possessing specific invigorants that the quacks who pretend to cure these complaints rest their claims to confidence. Temporary irritation may, indeed, be excited; but that will only be followed by greater debility, and, in more than one case which has fallen under my notice, a total extinction of the venereal appetite has been the consequence of an over dose of cantharides.

During the night the bed-clothes should be as light as is consistent with due warmth. To sleep on a mattress is much preferable to a bed of down; and it is of particular importance not to indulge in repose a moment after the termination of the natural limits of sleep. “The head,” as the sagacious Osborn says, “being at that time too apt to become a cage for unclean ideas.”

Sleeping on the back should be avoided. This is best effected by raising the head very high, which prevents turning in the night, and is also useful by obviating the flow of blood to the brain, which is one cause of dreaming. That sleeping on the back is a

cause of lascivious dreams, is noticed by Horace.

Hic ego mendacem stultissimus usque puellam
Ad mediam noctem expecto : somnus tamen
aufert

Intentum Veneri : tum immundo somnia visu
Nocturnam vestem maculant, ventremque supinam.

Q. HORATII, sat. v. lib. i.

Sleeping in a supine posture is accounted the cause of many evils, which are enumerated in the following verse :

Lethæa est resupina quies, hinc omnia pallent,
Membra, jecur, nervi, ren, caput, os, stomachus.

Early rising is, indeed, the most effectual remedy for all nervous complaints, and forms an essential part of the cure of the present.*

* See an excellent Sermon on the Duties and Advantages of Early Rising, by John Wesley.

The sedulous use of a hard flesh-brush, or coarse cloth steeped in a strong solution of sea-salt, as soon as out of bed, is extremely beneficial.

If flannel has been habitually worn next the skin, it should be decidedly, but gradually left off, as no custom is more debilitating.*

To wear a plate of lead bound on the loins has been recommended by Pliny.

Considerable advantage is derived from washing the testicles, perinæum, and loins, regularly every morning with cold water. The coldness of the fluid may be increased, and the utility

* For a full account of the bad effects of flannel, see BUCHAN on Sea and Warm Bathing.

of the practice augmented, by dissolving a quantity of common salt in the water.

Bathing in the open sea, especially in autumn, when the heats of summer are over, has beneficial effects in strengthening the constitution, and is a very useful remedy in this complaint. Venus herself is feigned by the poets to have sprung from the sea :

Orta salo, suscepta solo, patre edita cœlo.

Debilitated persons can rarely endure the cold bath ; but, if inconvenient to repair to the sea, bathing in an open river may be resorted to with advantage.

In complaints of this nature, the due

regulation of diet is of great importance ; but is also attended with considerable difficulty. The unnatural and too frequent irritation, to which the parts of generation have been subjected, imparts to the testicles a habit of secreting a preternatural quantity of semen. But the nutritious and succulent food, which the debilitated constitution seems to require, tends to augment the quantity of this as of all other secretions. The increased secretion stimulates the parts, and thus multiplies the frequency of nocturnal pollutions.

It becomes necessary, therefore, for a time, the limits of which will afterwards be specified, to abstain from ali-

ments of too nutritious a nature. Milk, butter, fat, eggs, soups of all kinds, sago, potatoes, and chocolate, should be abstained from. Salt also, which acts peculiarly as a stimulant on the organs of generation, should be sparingly used. But a total abstinence from this necessary condiment is apt to be attended with indigestion. Sugar, and all sweetmeats, and made wines, are peculiarly injurious; their use ought to be wholly given up.

The preferable diet, at the commencement of the treatment of this complaint, should consist of the flesh of adult animals, plainly roasted or boiled. Cold meat, for breakfast or luncheon, is preferable to tea or cof-

fee. Tea should on no account be taken in the evening. If the appetite requires supper, a little cold meat may be taken. Port wine with water, or good porter, forms the best beverage. All drink should be taken cold. The fluid taken into the stomach should be limited to as small a quantity as the constitution requires. The whole daily measure of drink ought not to exceed a pint and a half. The xerophagia, *dieta sicca*, or dry diet, of the ancient Anchorites, is peculiarly useful in these complaints, and should be adhered to as strictly as possible.

The following are some simple forms of tonic medicines useful in these complaints :

Take of powdered Peruvian bark one ounce, powdered cloves a dram; infuse in a bottle of port wine for twenty-four hours, occasionally shaking the mixture: a wine-glass full poured off clear may be taken at noon and eight at night.

An ounce of bark may in like manner be infused in a quart of distilled water, and a wine-glass full, with twenty drops of diluted sulphuric acid, taken twice a day.

The elixir of vitriol taken with the mineral waters of Bristol is useful; and if combined with the salubrious air of that delightful watering place, I have known it frequently to prove invigorating in cases of extreme debility.

The water and air of Malvern are also advantageous.

Take of catechu in powder two drachms; boiling water, seven ounces; infuse for two hours, strain, and add of compound tincture of ammonia, half an ounce. Of this a wine-glass may be taken twice a day.

Tincture of catechu, two ounces; compound spirit of lavender,⁴ two drachms. Take a tea-spoonful in a little water twice a day.

Take of powdered catechu, two drachms; cinnamon and myrrh, each one drachm; liquor of potash sufficient to form into a mass for pills. Divide into sixty-four pills, of which two may be taken twice a day.

Take of powdered myrrh, two drachms; rhubarb and carbonate of iron, each one drachm; liquor of potash, q. s. Divide into sixty-four pills, of which two may be taken twice a day.

Infusion of quassia seven ounces; tincture of catechu, half an ounce. A large table-spoonful may be taken twice a day.

Pills of powdered rhubarb and Venice turpentine are frequently useful.

The root of the ginseng may be chewed, and the saliva swallowed with advantage.

Of what used to be termed Hoffman's anodyne liquor, now the compound spirit of vitriolic æther, from twenty to thirty drops may be taken in water at bed-time.

These are, perhaps, all the remedies that a person may venture upon without professional superintendence.*

Purging is improper, and blood-letting dangerous. Costiveness must, however, be prevented. It is always possible to regulate the bowels by eating some fruit, a few French plums, or figs, between breakfast and dinner.

* Remedies of a different but less safe nature may be found in the curious work of Meibomius, *De Flagrorum usu, in re Venerea*.

By a strict adherence to the plan which has been detailed, a certain measure of improved health may be confidently expected. If the seminal effusions are so far restrained in frequency as to occur only once a fortnight, as much is obtained as is in the power of art. A certain quantity of semen being at all times secreted in every healthy constitution; and where sexual intercourse is abstained from, these discharges are the natural means of evacuating the superfluity :

Multi enim ex venere, etiam a seminis per somnum assidua profusione, liberati sunt

PAULUS.

Instances occur where the tensio penis and venereal appetite are removed by a copious perspiration taking place on the scrotum and perinæum.

Many persons, labouring under this species of debility, entertain an erroneous opinion, that it is possible by medicines to put an immediate stop to these enfeebling discharges. Such, however, is not the case. The only remedies that could produce this effect, are such as would in the same degree impair or destroy the venereal appetite. This purpose may, in some measure, be effected by drinking freely of strong wines or spirits. Even strong coffee taken freely, greatly diminishes the venereal propensity. But

these effects are owing to the vigour of the constitution in general being also diminished.

Hemlock, particularly if combined with camphor, has powerful effects in allaying venereal inclinations.

The ancients believed, that complete impotence might be produced, even by the external use of hemlock. Pliny observes, *Extinguit venerem cicutā testibus circa pubertatem illita*: His. Nat. lib. 25. c. 13. And in a book entitled “*Eunuchism displayed*,” it is asserted, that there are three ways of rendering men eunuchs; by excision of the testicles, by twisting the spermatic cord, and by the exhibition of hemlock. The author was acquainted

with an officer, who, when hemlock was a very fashionable remedy, took a considerable quantity, with a view to cure him of gout. This purpose, he said, it completely effected, as he never had another fit; but it totally deprived him of his virility, which he passed the remainder of his life in anxious but fruitless endeavours to recover.

The introduction of a bougie of elastic gum, of as large a size as the urethra will admit, and keeping it inserted for ten minutes twice a day, merely by pressing upon the parts, will give a temporary tone, as a tight bandage acts when applied to an anasarcaous limb.

It is not, however, to obtain the extinction but the renovation of venereal vigour that patients in general apply for medical aid.

The sole effectual means which the unfortunate votaries of this vice have to recover their health of body and peace of mind, is, a return to the paths of Nature, from which very many of them have unwittingly strayed.

It is, indeed, extraordinary, that abstaining from sexual intercourse should ever have been proposed as the leading point in the cure of these complaints, such, however, has been the case. The attempt to extinguish the venereal appetite, and the endeavours to evacuate the seminal fluid,

the secretion of which is always gaining on the healthy body, by other means than those appointed by Nature, constitute the very essential cause of such complaints.

In truth, "it is not good for man to be alone," as was declared by our Creator, when "He made an helpmeet for him." Woman was formed to complete the well-being of man, and men who abstain from their society, are rarely either happy or healthy.

Marriage constitutes the bond of society, forms the security of property, and the respect paid to its sanctions, affords the best test of the moral condition of a civilized nation. How debased is that state of society, where

a woman is sold and treated as a slave, compared with that in which she is placed in her due station, and considered as the companion and equal of man? It is uniformly observed in India, that the Hindoos, who marry early in life, are a far more respectable and moral class of people than the Mahometans, whose religion permits them to indulge in promiscuous concubinage.

Early marriages are said to be generally the most happy ; and the festivities with which the rites of matrimony are every where celebrated, afford proofs of the utility as well as the sanctity of the institution.

The main intention of cure required

for those persons who suppose themselves debilitated by such improper practices, is to restore them to such a measure of health as may enable them to enter upon the state of wedlock, the only natural and real remedy for such complaints. The inability for sexual intercourse depends much more frequently on the state of the mind, than of the body ; the reasons for this opinion have been detailed in a former part of this treatise.

Because a man feels himself, perhaps, incapable of having immediate connection with a female, picked up at random, it by no means follows, that he is totally deprived of his virility ; such, however, is the manner

in which these unhappy beings generally reason. The idea of being incapable of sexual intercourse preys upon their minds, and too frequently leads them to think they are unfit to live.

Extensive observation has convinced the author, that the habit of sleeping with a female revives the natural sexual appetite, and that, after a time, even the most debilitated recover their vigour. I have counselled many to venture upon matrimony, and never knew one instance in which the experiment failed; although on one occasion a gentleman waited on me the morning after marriage, with distraction in his looks, and a loaded pis-

bol in each pocket, threatening instant destruction to me or himself, as having induced him to impose upon an amiable woman, and ruined his peace of mind for ever. By convincing him, that he had by no means duly complied with the advice I had given him, I succeeded in persuading him to entrust me with his pistols till he returned from a tour to the country, which I stated to be requisite for his health, when he should be at liberty to make what use of them he pleased. In a short time I received a letter from him, expressing contrition for his folly, and acknowledging himself to be perfectly well in every respect. He is now the father of three children.

Certainly there are cases, accompanied with much timidity and dejection of mind, where it would not be prudent to enter immediately upon the state of matrimony. It would be an affectation of prudery not to acknowledge that, in the present condition of society, females might readily be procured for money, who would consent to be the subject of experiment. Attention should be paid to their health, and they should be acquainted with the purpose intended. The directions for the conduct of the patient hardly admit of being put upon paper.

Some years ago I had a correspondence with the tutor of an individual, whose person I never knew, but

who, I have reason to believe, was a man of rank and fortune. His unworthy predecessor had initiated his pupil in these shameful practices, by which he was reduced to the last degree of mental and corporeal imbecility. The gentleman had the good sense to perceive the propriety of the advice given to the patient, though he objected to its morality. A prudent woman was selected, who, in the course of six months, became pregnant, and the young gentleman, restored to health, was married according to his rank and station in life.

If this experiment be tried, and, after the effects of novelty have subsided, the calls of natural appetite, in-

dependently of mental excitement, do not instigate him to sexual intercourse, the patient should consider himself as unfit for the state of matrimony. Let him endeavour to find other sources of consolation, and not augment his own misery by the sacrifice of some, perhaps, worthy female, upon whose credulity he imposes in the most unmanlike manner, by marrying under such circumstances, if he conceal them, and in whose society he can expect nothing but dislike, reproach, and contempt. Such cases, I have reason to believe, are very rare; I have never met with one.

When the sexual intercourse is established, the plan of diet formerly

recommended is by no means to be persisted in. The most nutritious food may be indulged in, not only with safety, but advantage. Chocolate with biscuit, but no butter, forms the best breakfast. All sorts of shell and flat fish, such as lobsters, oysters, scate, turbot, dories, plaice, that agree with the stomach, may be eaten, also game and pigeons, or eels, if they agree. I knew a very old and respectable physician, who particularly recommended Windsor beans and bacon. In short, all food that agrees with the stomach. Of the quantity proper to be taken, the appetite, which is always much improved, is the best criterion. Tea and coffee are certainly debilitating. The whole quantity of fluid, con-

sisting of beer, wine, and water, should not, however, exceed three pints per day.

The following case of impotence, originating in too great vigour, is related as being curious and singular:—
A young man of uncommonly athletic and healthy appearance, although he had vigorous erections, and complete enjoyment of sexual intercourse, complained that he never emitted semen in coition; the fluid appeared to pass along the urethra to a certain point, and then to stop. Some time afterwards, when the penis became flaccid, a quantity of glary fluid passed away insensibly from the urethra. Impregnation of the female was thus completely prevented. In this instance

the urethra appeared to be so much contracted by the violence of the spasm as to obstruct the passage of the seminal fluid, which, when the parts were relaxed, gradually exuded from the penis. The complaint was removed by bleeding, the use of a warm bath, the occasional introduction of a bougie, and a milk and farinaceous diet.

An analogous case is related by *ÆTIUS*, of a man who was incapable of emitting semen in the act of coition; but had frequent seminal emissions during sleep, unattended with any pleasurable sensations.

The proper treatment of the seminal emissions which take place during

the day, a more insidious, although not a less dangerous disease, shall now be considered. This complaint was well known to the physicians of antiquity. Celsus dedicates a whole chapter to the symptoms and treatment of this disease, with the following title :

DE SEMINIS NIMIA EX NATURALIBUS PROFUSIONE.

Translation. “ The natural parts are also liable to another evil, a profuse discharge of the seminal fluid, which, taking place without sexual intercourse or nocturnal phantasms, after a time brings on consumption, by which life is terminated.

“ In this affection, vehement frictions, affusions of, or swimming in the coldest, water, are salutary ; neither should

any food or drink be taken, except quite cold. It is proper to avoid indigestion, and all flatulent food. To abstain from all articles tending to augment the secretion of semen, such as rye, fine flour, eggs, buck-wheat, starch, all glutinous food, pepper, onions, and nuts. Fomentations and cataplasms of the most powerful astringent plants, as vervain, &c. applied to the pubes, groins, and testicles, are proper. Vinegar and water may also be applied cold. Rue should also be avoided, and the patient should be careful never to sleep lying upon his back."

CELSUS De Med. lib. iv. cap. 21.

This affection is also described by
ARETÆUS CAPPADOX De Seminis
Profluvio. "Profluit semen, neque ip-

sum vel insomniis cohibere possumus. Verum seu quis dormiat, seu vigilet, continens profusio est. Neque id quod fit, sensu percipitur.

This disease is, indeed, the true gonorrhœa, or flux of semen. It is from confounding the discharge of mucus from the urethra, originating from impure connexion, and calling it by the same name, that all the improper and dangerous practice of using repellent and astringent injections has arisen. The discharge produced in case of infection is, in truth, the natural cure of the disease, and should never be checked by any local repellents. From their improper use arise most of the strictures and diseases of the prostate gland, by

which life is so frequently rendered miserable.

The symptoms, attendant on this complaint, are entirely the same as those which attend nocturnal pollutions. It most commonly occurs in persons who have been addicted to masturbation; but who, convinced of the danger and vice of the practice, have given it up, and as they conceive themselves to lead a life of perfect chastity, are frequently unaware of the real cause of their wasting and imbecility.

I have known it occur too in others; once in a married man from inattention to the state of his bowels. He was quite at a loss to account for the wasting of his flesh, and the diminu-

tion of his virility. By proper treatment he recovered. This complaint more frequently lays the foundation of phthisis pulmonalis, than is commonly suspected.

If, therefore, a young man appears to lose his flesh, to become dejected in spirits, and diminished in strength, so as to be unable to take his customary exercise, and complains of pain in the back, it becomes requisite for his medical attendant to inquire particularly respecting the cause of those symptoms, which, if neglected, will assuredly terminate in consumption.

Persons affected with this complaint are generally unconscious of its existence. The semen passes away immediately after the urine, or upon the

slightest efforts to discharge the fæces, unattended with any sense of titilation, and mingling with the fæces leaves little or no stain upon the linen, and hardly any evident symptom by which the disease can be suspected.

To discover this complaint it is necessary that, after having discharged his urine, the patient should go to stool in such a position that the glans penis may be exposed, and the nature of the matter discharged from the urethra at the time of exonerating the bowels detected and examined. The quantity of seminal fluid discharged in this manner at any one time does not equal that taking place from nocturnal pollutions, yet as the discharge may occur once, or even twice, every day,

this complaint is no less dangerous, and even more fatal, than the other.

It may be considered as a general law in the animal economy, that whatever removes debility becomes a tonic, although not in itself a strengthening remedy. We must, therefore, be cautious not to prescribe nutritious diet in this complaint, which, by augmenting the secretion of semen, and consequently distending the vesiculæ seminales, would render them so much the more liable to be compressed, and their contents evacuated by the pressure of the hardened fæces.

The accumulation of fæces in the rectum should be sedulously guarded against, by administering daily a mild clyster, composed of a decoction of

althæa, watergruel, or infusion of bran ; this not only dilutes the fæces, but operating also as a local warm-bath, diminishes the irritability of the parts. The patient must carefully abstain from all effort in exonerating the bowels. It is also of much importance that he should go to stool in a posture as nearly upright as possible, for which proper mechanical contrivances should be adapted : attention to this position will often alone effect a cure. In the cure of prolapsus ani of children, and the procidentia uteri of women, attention to this circumstance is also of much importance. All astringent and styptic remedies by indurating the fæces do more harm than good.

General cold or sea-bathing is useful. Much benefit is also derived from the application of cold. The private parts should be daily washed with cold water; and a sponge immersed in water rendered cold by the addition of salt, should repeatedly in the course of the day be applied to the perinæum, behind the scrotum. This alone has effected a cure.

THE END.

